CRASHED

SAM AND SPECCY!

Oct 1994
£1.00
Issue 2



It's A Goal

A new Speccy game (But is it any good?)

Review inside!

This is...

CRASHED

SAM AND SPECCY!

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(Sheepish grin.) Er, hello. Readers in certain areas may recieve this issue of Crashed slightly late, due to to due to oh what's the point?

All right, I admit it. I'm typing this editorial on deadline day for issue three. Look I'm sorry, OK? Since the last issue, there's been all sorts of unforseen problems and things cropping up, and, yes, issue two is just over a month late.

However, we shall soldier on! In an attempt to catch up, issue three will be out in a couple of weeks, and, with any luck, issue four will be out, as scheduled, on November 17th. (Probably.)

Totally unconnected to the above, you may notice that this issue is markedly smaller than the last one. This is due to a shortage of (a) writers and (b) money. However, next ish should see the first appearence of some outside contributers, including a technical correspondent whose name I shouldn't really mention because he hasn't actually said yes yet – so if you've got any techy queries, you know where to come. (Here, you clots.)

However, don't let that stop you from you from writing something – I'm still on the lookout for reviewers, PD writers, adventure writers, and communications correspondents. Basically, write something, send it in, and I'll stick it in the mag. Don't worry about deadlines and things – after all, I don't. Ha ha.

You must remember that Crashed isn't like, say, Sinclair User in that you could pick up a copy of SU, not buy another ish until a year later, and it'd still be going strong. Small fanzines need as much support as they can get. It really does matter whether you decide to stick that pound coin in an envelope or not. For example, I got five orders for the first issue; this month I got six. That's a 25% readership increase, just because of one person.

Stick with us. You won't regret it.

MARK STURDY
Editor

Crashed, issue two, was written and designed by Mark Sturdy. It was produced on a PAM Coupe using The DTP Pack, and printed on a Citizen Swift 200. SUBSCRIPTION RATE (going cheap!): £6 per year. ADVERTISING RATES (prices slashed!): Full page – £5. Half page – £2.50. Quarter page – £1.25. First inclusion free. Thanks this issue to Colin Macdonald. CRASHED, Pear Tree Cottage, North Deighton, Wetherby, West Yorks, LS22 4EN. ABC Aug-Sept 1994: 5. The wit and wisdom of Bryan Ferry, number one: "They say 'Love's a gamble, hard to win easy lose, so while the sun shines better make hay', so if life is a table and fate is the wheel, then let the dice fall where they may." – Editions Of You, 1973.

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News Input

End of the road for +3 disks?

According to a report in a recent edition of Amstrad Action, Maxell have stopped manufacturing their 3" CF2 disks, those used not only in the Spectrum +3, but also in Amstrad's CPC and PCW ranges. Although Maxell were the last company to manufacture these disks, their stated reason for stopping is lack of demand, so there's probably enough surplus stock kicking around warehouses to last a while. In particular, Woodpecker Disks are apparently still supplying ready formatted +3 disks - more info as soon as I can find an address or phone number for Woodpecker.

There's also a chance that a smaller, Speccy-dedicated, company may take over manufacturing the disks, in the same way that BG Services took over making keyboard membranes. So we'll wait and we will wonder.

New SAM zine

SAM2SAM is the latest SAM disk zine to spring forth from the loins of our true-footed chum (or something). Unusually, STS (as people too lazy to type the full name are already calling it) comes on two disks. The first is yer typical news/reviews/previews/programming tutorials type thang, while the second features a selection of homegrown games. Sounds so good that I might even buy it. (But I doubt it.)

Robocod on the Speccy at last?

Those of you who used to buy Your Sinclair (at the last count everybody) may recall 1992's Save Our Speccy campaign. This entailed writing to lots of software houses in a vain attempt to make them keep releasing Spectrum games. The result of this was the release of Nigel Mansell's World Championship by Gremlin. There were also mutterings that US Gold might do Robocod, but apparently the programmers, Millennium, weren't interested, and everyone assumed that the game had been dropped.

However, there are now rumours that Robocod has finally been released on USG's budget label, Kixx, for £3.99. The thing is that no-one seems to have actually seen the game. More details (if there are any) next ish.

All not-very-quiet on the Western front

West Coast Computers, eh? They buy the rights to the SAM, don't do anything for a year and a half, make everyone think they're crap, then they're all over the place!

Hot on the heels of the new disk drive and the SAM Elite, West Coast have now revolutionised the SAM world with a fit-it-yerself disk drive. For just £64.95 (or £29.95 if you've already got your own drive) you're supplied with everything you need to fit one of those nice new drives to your Coupe (note that the kit is not compatible with the Elite), just as long as you're a dab hand with the ol' soldering iron. Contact West Coast for more info.

West Coast have also launched the limited edition SAM Coupe Special Pack. For the bargain price of £109.95, you get a 256K SAM with an external drive interface, so if you've got a Plus D or Disciple, you can use your existing drive £109.95, eh? How do they do it? (Actually, they recalled a load of ancient tape-based SAMs from foreign parts, chucked them in a box with new software, manuals and PSUs, and slapped a two year guarantee on them. But I'm not supposed to mention that.)

Jupiter Software are here

Sorry to disappoint all you crap joke fans out there, but I'm afraid that I'm going to have to get through this story without cracking any kind of astrological puns. Sorry.

Jupiter Software are a new company dedicated to providing new games for the SAM. Their current products include Jupiter Shareware Disk One (which I don't know anything about), Bombs Away (a graphic adventure) and Invaders (a shoot-'em-up). Reviews next ish (possibly).

Spec-TV is here!

After the constant string of disappointments that has been Micro Live, Games Master, Bad Influence and The Net, the Speccy has finally made it on to the small screen! Well, sort of.

The computer games section of Channel 4's answer to the information supermegacyberglobalvillage hyperpunksurfermotorway (or whatever the News at Ten people say we've got to call the Internet this week) now features, in amongst the mountain of swans, cats, chinc, Danny Boyd and Alex Seymour, a nostalgia fest by the name of 'Old Game HERE'. In this hallowed sanctum, you will find lots of Atari Jaguar owners saying how they know the Spectrum was great really 'cos it had really silly games that you could buy for two quid and mags that aren't a load of pretentious, pompous nonsense and keys and that. (And giving Skool Daze 97%, heh heh.)

But where, you may ask, can I find this feast of reminiscence? Try P473 at weekends.

Wishful thinking

Amstrad have announced their first real development since buying the rights to the Spectrum last year.

This August, the Spectrum 128K (the machine launched by Sinclair in 1986) will be phased out to be replaced by the Sinclair ZX Spectrum +2. This machine will be based around the Sinclair 128K, but will incorporate an integral 1meg 3.5" disk drive, two standard Atari-compatible joystick ports (switchable for Kempston or Interface 1 compatibility), a Centronics-compatible printer port, a full size typewriter-style keyboard, a scart monitor socket and an auxiliary port (intended for products currently in development at Amstrad, including a light gun and a mouse). The machine, priced at £174.99, is expected to sell at least 100,000 by Christmas, and all the major software houses have gone on record as saying they will support the machine with enhanced versions of existing software (most of the companies we spoke to were planning more complex graphics and/or extra levels), as well as +2 only games.

The Spectrum +2, with perfect backwards compatibility with existing software and hardware, coupled with an innovative design and a sensible price, will easily beat off competition from the new generation of games consoles and "16-bit" computers, and is likely to take Spectrum computing well into the 1990s. Ha ha. Sob.

Post Box

AM games

pex
Hunter Road
rnold
itts
>5 6QZ

lyzium Software
dventures)
D Chadswell
aights
chfield
taffs
S13 6BH

9 Software
1 Mill Lane
lanburn Road
alkmersdale
nes
N8 8RH
+1 0695 31163

ed Publishing
D Roundyhill
onfteth
ndee
JS 4RZ
0382 535 693

evelation Software
1 Box 114
xeter
evon
X4 1YY

upplement
oftware
7 Parker Street
lexwich
alsall
S3 2LE
+1 0922 406
39

pectrum games

Dreamworld (adventures)
10 Medhurst Close
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 4HL

EDOS
1 Mapperton Close
Canford Heath
Poole
Dorset
BH17 8AF

Everglade
68 Telford Street
Inverness
Scotland
IV3 5LS
Tel 0463 240 168

FSF Adventures
40 Harvey Gardens
Charlton
London
SE7 8AJ

Software Shop
48 High Street
Renfrew
Renfrewshire
Scotland
PA4 8QP
Tel 041 885 2761

Spectrum Software Hire
33 Dursley Road
Trowbridge
Wilts
BA14 0NW

Wizard Games
1 North Marine Road
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO12 7EY
Tel. 0723 37[illegible] 586

Zenobi (adventures)
26 Spotland Tops
Cutgate
Rochdale
Lancs
OL12 7NX

Serious software

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Spectrum software

Kobrahsoft
Pleasant View
Hulme Lane
Hulme
Longton
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffs
ST3 5BH
Tel 0782 306 244

Lerm
11 Beaconsfield Close
Whitley Bay
Tyne And Wear
NE25 9UW
Tel 091 2533615

SD Software
70 Rainhall Road
Barnoldswick
Lancashire
BB8 6AB

Serious SAM software

Betasoft
24 Wyche Avenue
Kings Heath
Birmingham
B14 6LQ

Fred Publishing (see above for address)

Revelation Software
(see above for address)

Steve's Software
7 Narrow Close
Histon
Cambridge
CB4 4XX
Tel 0223 235 250

SAM PD software

Prism PD
13 Rodney Close
Bilton
Rugby
CV22 7HJ

SAM PD
(see F9 software above for address)

Spectrum PD software

Atchemist PD
62 Withe Barn Lane
Woodhouse
Sheffield
S13 7LN
Tel 0114 269 7044

Prism PD
(see above for address)

RAS
24 Parsloes Avenue
Dagenham
RM9 5NX

Rave PD
6 Fearnhurst Close
Lower Tean
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffs
ST10 4NN

Spectrum PD
108 Stanley Road
Gloucester
GL1 5QH

New Spectrums QL Interface Is and Microdrives

EEC
18-21 Misbourne House
Chiltern Hill
Chalfont St. Peter
Bucks
SL9 9UE
Tel. 0753 888 866

New SAMs and accessories

West Coast Orders Format Publications
34 Bourton Road
Gloucester
GL4 0LE
Tel 0452 412572

Spectrum spares and repairs

Omnidale Supplies
23 Cuzron Street
Derby
DE1 2ES
Tel 0332 291219

MS Computer Services
Unit 2
The Orchard
Warton
Preston
Lancs
PR4 1BE
Tel. 0772 632686

MGS Electronics Ltd
Studio Master House
Chaul End Lane
Luton
Beds
LU4 8EZ
Tel 0582 491949

Trading Post
Victoria Road
Shifnal
Shropshire
TF11 8AF

Video Vault
Old Kingsmoor School
Railway Street
Hadfield
Cheshire
SK14 8AA
Tel. 0457 866555

SAM repairs

Blue Alpha Electronics
18 Maesybont
Glanamman
Ammanford
Dyfed
SA18 2AY
Tel 0269 824093

SAM and Spectrum hardware

DG Services
64 Roebuck Road
Chessington
Surrey
KT9 1JX
Tel 081 3970 763

Spectrum hardware

Datel Electronics
Fenton Industrial Estate
Fenton
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 2RS
Tel 0782 744 324

Romantic Robot
54 Deanscroft Avenue
London
NW9 8EN
Tel 081 200 8870

SAM/Spectrum fanzines

Format (£1.50) (see West Coast Orders for address)

Fish (25p & SAE)
3 Station Road
Birch Vale
Stockport
Cheshire
SK12 5BP

Prism Power
(see Prism PD above for address)

Spelunker (adventures, £1.50)
11 Finsbury Drive
Wrose
Bradford
BD2 1DA

Your St Clair (??????)
52 Horton Brides Road
[illegible]F37 4NE

ZA1 (£1.50)
33 Dawley Bank
Telford
Shropshire
TE4 2LQ

Zodiac
New House
Holbear
Chard
Somerset
TA20 2RS
Tel 0460 62118

SAM diskzines

Fred (£2)
40 Roundyhill
Monifieth
Dundee
DD5 4RZ

SAM Prime
19 Lyme Avenue
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 7RS

SAM2SAM (£2)
The Mount
Mey Hill
Ramsey
Isle of Man
IM8 2HG

SAM Supplement (£2)
37 Parker Street
Bloxwich
Walsall
WS3 2LE

Spectrum tapezines

Alchnews
(see Alchemist PD for address)

Datel
605 Loughborough Road
Birstall
Leicester
LE4 4NJ

User groups

Alchemist Research
(see Alchemist PD for address)

INDUG
(see West Coast Orders for address)

Independent 8-Bit Association
5 Beacon Flats
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 1RG

THE FORUM

Hello and welcome to the Forum the voice of the people, your opportunity to air you views, make your opinions heard, rant, rave, get on your soap box, vent your spleen and say what has to be said. (Shame that this month's edition consists almost entirely of letters that people have sent hoping for a quick plug/free issue/info, edited so that they make sense to anyone other than me, really. Ho hum.)

deserter writes

ear Mark,

ola You know, I idn't really xpect to answer our letter for nother 700 ears, but, as it appens, I've anaged to finish ll my writing or this month's ssue of Game one and so am aking full dvantage of the xtra free time o eat a sandwich nd write to eople, of which ou are one, but ot a sandwich r something

Anyway, please ccept this small icture of a wasp to celebrate our ascension to he pantheon of he gods Your nely edited 'zine nd particularly uel Ed comment ollowing my omplaints egarding the emise of Crash have won you this great honour and a place at the slightly abused high table of Edship Carve your name on it with pride, but not when the head waiter is looking because he tends to attack such people with chests of draws

Enjoy

Happy trails,
Jonathan Nash
Future Publishing
Bath

Thanks for writing, Jonathan However, minus Brownie points for not ordering Crashed, despite my sending you an incredibly exclusive (eleven, if memory serves, were sent out) copy of Issue 0 Continuing in this bitching vein, just why did YS close down? I mean, (sister mags) Amstrad Action and Commodore Format are still on the go, and their readerships are now way below YS's supposedly piddling figure of 25 thousand All it needed was a bit of imaginative marketing (I've never, ever seen a house ad for YS in any other Future mags, despite the ads for Games Master and the like in YS) and cost cutting - I mean, why did the smallest ever issue of YS have one of the biggest ever covertapes? - to get it back on the tracks. Don't get me wrong YS was a wonderful, individual, anarchic thing right up to the end, streets ahead of any 16-bit or console mags, but had things just been a bit different, it could still be great now

Of course, I could be completely barking up the wrong tree You could be ordering Crashed under an assumed name to avoid the blaze of publicity that inevitably surrounds those who have, over the years, achieved cult hero status in the Speccyverse ('hem 'hem), and I'm sure that had it not been for your revitalising effect on YS, it would probably have petered out long before it did And it really was extremely kind of you to bosh out two sides of A4 at no personal gain for me to use in the interview last ish But still, eh?

Ed.

Matt Biel? Mat Bealby? Blimey!

Dear Mark,

Hello Thanks ever so for the Issue 0 of Crashed. I liked it ever so much, and was only slightly concerned that it seems to be at least as good as Fish was on its pilot issue It will be getting a mention in Issue 8 (Actually, I thought there wouldn't be enough room, but as I went to pick up my copy of Robocod to review I was informed that it hasn't been released, or something, so)

I eagerly await the first ish of Crashed, for which I enclose £1 Please and thank you

Well, I think that's everything Ta-ta

Mat Beal
Fish
Stockport
Cheshire

Nice to see someone still taking an interest, eh, Mr Nash?

Incidentally, if there's anyone out there who still hasn't seen Fish, Mat's zine, it comes highly reccomended to all and sundry - something of a YS to Crashed's, er, Crash, I feel.

Ed.

Blimey - a proper letter

Dear Mark,

Thanks for the impressive first issue of Crashed I enjoyed reading all the sections and it was well presented. The interview was particularly good I did notice in your SAM reviews, however, that you seemed near to the console/16 bit trend of reviewing 'If the graphics are crap, so is the whole game' This was only a minor point, though, in a good 'zine

Don't worry about the small readership Fish only had three orders for their first issue and now have over thirty I'm sure word will spread quickly - Spectrum UK now have 3,000 members after only 8 months in production

Regarding contributions, I may be able to send in some stuff I currently write for ZAT and I'm in my final year of university (yup, I'm a student - bad luck to me), so I haven't got much free time It also depends on what articles you want, I could write some game reviews, but what games are you planning to review - old or new? There aren't many new Speccy games these days (I've only got a Spectrum 128) but there are a few I don't know much about PD but I've done a few PD reviews for ZAT so I could do some wibble. Please let me know if you want any contributions, but I may have trouble doing something for every issue if it's monthly

In the Post Box section, I think Software City have closed down I ordered some games three months ago and got nothing back The cheque wasn't cashed and no-one answers their phone However, there is a shop in Scotland who are freindly and sell Spectrum games Their address is Everglade, 68 Telford Street, Inverness, Scotland, IV3 5LS Tel 0463 240 168

All the best,
St John Swainson
Rickmansworth
Herts

As far as the

reviews go, if I gave Quatris 85%, for example, what mark would I have given it if it was the best SAM game yet? What would I have done if it had a different E-Tracker tune for each of its 120 levels, rather than a buzzy Sound Machine ditty on the title screen and 20 levels of silence? If it had mind-blowing yet subtle smooth-scrolling backdrops, rather than an empty black void? So perhaps I'm going a bit over the top, but do you see my point of view? After the likes of Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters, Prince Of Persia and even Boing, SAM owners know what to expect, and games like Trick Track and Quatris really do sell the machine short. If they had been Spectrum games I'd probably have given them somewhere in the region of 75%-80%, but the SAM really is capable of so much better.

Which brings me to something of a mystery. Just who are Spectrum UK? I hear mentions of them everywhere, but I've not once seen an address or phone number. They sound like a fairly decent bunch, though. Tell me more!

Contributions - yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! Yes. This applies to anyone else who's interested, as well. There's no obligation - if you write one article, it doesn't mean I'll be ringing you up every five minutes threatening to firebomb your house if you don't write 1200 words on printer interfaces for tomorrow morning, or anything like that. The review policy is to cover any Spectrum or SAM game released (or re-released) since YS ended, or any currently-available game that may have been overlooked at the time of release.

Thanks for the info regarding Software City and Everglade. Readers, this man is an example to you all - it really does make all the difference when just one person takes an interest.

Ed.

Fountain of knowledge

Dear Crashed,

It's excellent to see another Spectrum fanzine appearing, but the trouble is I've not seen a copy of yours yet! How much does it cost?

I help write Sinclair Classic tapezine, which is free and comes out every two months. We've been going since July 4th 1993 and have built up a sizeable readership (especially in Europe). We'd like to offer you the space to advertise and it won't cost a penny. From issue 9 (due 4th Nov) we are planning a regular Speccy mart section - two screens of box and lineage ads. Simply design us your own box ad (7x5 attrib block max.) or word a lineage ad and we'll include it with every issue until you decide to change the wording/design (or withdraw it of course!).

Hope to hear from you very soon. Sinclair Classic is available from Alcemist + Prism, or direct from us if you send a blank tape.

Up the Speccy!
Dave Fountain
Sinclair Classic
Nottingham

Thanks, Dave - my ad should reach you with this issue. Although I haven't yet seen a copy of Sinclair Classic, I'd be glad to give it a mention in the fanzine round up I'm planning for issue 4 or 5.

Ed.

You want a cherry

Dear Sir/Madam,

I've recently been informed that you've started up a Spectrum and SAM fanzine, and are looking for writers and support, and I'd be happy to offer that.

I've helped establish a great many magazines, clubs and PD libraries and would like to do the same for you. I'm a qualified writer and have written many Spectrum-related magazine articles in the past. I also offer free PD software in relation to any article which may feature details on them.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you shortly!

Best wishes
Andy Davis
Alchemist Research
Sheffield

Thanks Andy - if you write something, I'll be glad to include it. (The heading, by the way, is an obscure Kate Bush reference.)

Ed.

Pie strikes back

Dear Mark,

I was pleased to recieve your letter about Crashed. It's good to see there are still people out there who appreciated what we did and are keeping the Spectrum and SAM scenes alive.

I wish you every success with your venture and I'd love to have a look at a copy of the finished fanzine when you have one. Good look in finding John Richardson - I haven't a clue where he is myself. And as for Lloyd Mangram, I'm sorry to say he never really existed! The name was used by any freelance writer or work experience journalist we had in CRASH Towers at the time.

Good luck!
Nick Roberts
Europress Impact
Ludlow
Shropshire

This letter was dated 22 February 1993, and refers to the very early stages of Crashed's development. And I still haven't got over the Lloyd Mangram bombshell! He seemed so real...

Ed.

That's it for this issue. All comments, criticism and constructive abuse should be addressed to: Crashed, Pear Tree Cottage, North Deighton, Wetherby, West Yorks, LS22 4EN.

Mark's PLAYING TIPS!

Hello. Well, despite my poignant requset for tips last month, no-one seems to have paid any attention to me. So, er, here's some more stuff ripped out of old mags. (Not that you deserve it, you ungrateful basts. I don't know - hours locked up here toiling over a hot keyboard while I could be going to parties and taking loads of hard drugs and things, and how do you repay me? OK, so you buy the mag, but . . . oh, never mind.)

Dizzy corner

Well, I suppose it had to happen. Here's a collection of cheats and thangs for everyone's favourite smiling egg with boxing gloves. (Erk.)

Dizzy
Pause the game, then type NOOTRAC 4571. Dizzy should vanish. You can then press ENTER for another life and Z and X to scroll the rooms left and right.

Treasure Island Dizzy
If you don't know this cheat off by heart, then you've obviously never bought a Spectrum mag - back in the old days, if you threw a brick at a tips section, chances are you'd hit the old. Start the game, then hold down 'P, O and A until the music stops. If you press C, then Dizzy should dissappear, and you can use left and right to scroll through the screens. Press fire to reappear' gag. Ah, halcyon days of innocence, eh? (But where is the thirtieth coin? Answers on the back of a sealed postman to the usual address.)

Fantasy World Dizzy
If the hawk swoops at you, press fire to get it back up to the top of the screen. Also, you may not know that the rope ties the croc's jaws together, so he can't gnash you.

Magicland Dizzy
Er, there isn't a cheat mode, and there are no cunning bits that not everyone knows about. Just loads of walking around and jumping over rivers. Tch. (Hands up who prefers the earlier Dizzys where you don't spend ndurs just walking about, and you don't play solidly for four days solid, nearly complete the game, then fall in the river or something, die of frustration and never play the game again. Blimey, what a long sentence.)

Spellbound Dizzy
Type iWANTANOMLETTE on the title screen. The border should flash. Start the game, and press C for a cheat menu.

Crystal Kingdom Dizzy
Er, did anyone actually buy it? Upping the price from £3.99 to £9.99 just as your sales are dropping anyway - what an absolute stroke of genius.

And that's about it. In the future, Dizzy tips that are anything other than brand new will be burnt in a midnight ceremony on a bonfire with an effigy of David Darling on top.

3 Weeks In Paradise
When sitting down while losing a life, hold down SYMB. D and P for infinite, er, things.

Ace
Begin to climb vertically and reduce the thrust to zero to refuel without using any supplies. (Just keep your velocity below 9999, that's all.)

Android 2
Go to the first clearing and kill yourself four times, then walk on to a mine at the same time as a monster. You should be killed twice when you've only got one live, resulting in infinite lives.

Auf Wiedersehen Monty
When loading the game, type LOAD "" as normal, but after it type :REM MONTY. Press ENTER and start the tape. Once loaded, pick up any item to the left for infin... oh what's the point?

I'm sorry, OK? The Dizzy thing was only meant to take up a bit of space, and it just sort of . . . blossomed. If you want to see some cheats of a rather less eggy nature, then you'd better send them to Crashed, Pear Tree Cottage, North Deighton, Wetherby, West Yorks. LS22 4EN. Pip pip.

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It's A Goal

Spectrum (SAM compatible) ● Brensoft ● £4.50 (tape/3.5" disk) ● Programmed by Brendan O'Brien

The '94 World Cup Final, eh? Now that is what I call a dull, dull, dull football match. Two hours glued to a TV set to see 22 swarthy foreigners draw nil-nil, and the only interesting thing about the whole enterprise is the uncanny similarity between the hairstyles of Roberto Baggio and Curt Smith from Tears For Fears. Bah.

Sorry, I must have taken a wrong turning somewhere. Can you direct me to the game reviews?

Ah, yes. Sorry. (Knew I'd forgotten something.) It's A Goal is an overhead footy sim, from the keyboard of Irish programmer Brendan O'Brien (to whom, by some strange coincidence, you should make your cheques payable if you want a copy of the game, and send them to the address on the Post Box page). It features after-touch ball control, accurate passing, computer controlled goalies and lots of other things that I could copy from the manual, but won't. You can play against a friend or the computer, as well as in the World Cup or in a league competition against 16 of the top English and Scottish clubs. (Sorry, did I say I wasn't going to copy from the manual? I lied.)

Journalistic integrity? What's that?

I don't know and I don't care. The tape on which It's A Goal is supplied contains four programs: the 48K and 128K versions of the game, and the two versions of the Team Editor, which allows you to select the teams used in the Cup. However, all these are supplied on one side of a 90-minute tape. I suppose this is so that you can use the other side to save the game but it does mean that, unless you want to play the 128K version of the game, there's an outrageous amount of rewinding involved. What's particularly annoying is the way that the 128K version is just the 48K version with an extra block of sound and graphic effects tacked on, and a slightly different BASIC loader to accomodate this. Surely it would have made more sense to have put the Editor on one side and the game on the other, with a little routine that detects which computer the game's running on and loads the 128K bits accordingly, a la Treasure Island Dizzy?

Yes. That is right.

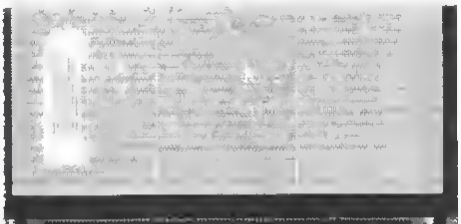
Technically, It's A Goal can't be faulted. The pointer-driven front end is meticulously polished and executed, with more options than you could hope for. The graphics are clear and attractive, the scrolling's fast and smooth beyond belief, and the sound effects on the 128K version are very smart indeed. (And now for a guest appearance from one of last month's sub-headings.)

Sounds fab.

Well it isn't. The problem with It's A Goal is that it's so pointlessly, absurdly, bewilderingly disorientating. There's 22 players, so they've all got to be on-screen at the same time. The screen never seems to scroll in the same direction for more than a second. There's none of those round bits and curves and things on the pitch, so you don't know where you are for half the time. If this sounds like the kind of game that could do strange things to your brain, you don't know the half of it.

Blimey! Better not buy it, then.

No, no, no, no, no. No. All I was trying to say was that It's A Goal has the potential to be a really brilliant game, but there are just too many aggravating elements for it to really make the grade. If you don't mind losing 6-0 to Switzerland for the first few games, it comes highly recommended.



Jimey, a screenshot! Suppose I'll have to think up a clever caption now. Um.

Ratings

Nice programming, shame about the design

PRESENTATION 75%
GRAPHICS 80%
SOUND 85%
PLAYABILITY 62%
LASTABILITY 70%
OVERALL 70%

Rotor

AM ● Supplement Software ● £5.00 ● Code by Daton ● Graphics by DGP ● Music by The Supple Boys ● 512K only

h no.

h God, no. It's a SAM puzzle ame. As well as the obvious ns-is-the-zenith-of-eight-bit echnology-and-it's-been-around-or-five years-look-where-the-pectrum-was in 1987 why-can't-ou-do something-different-for-hrist's-sake-don't-you realise-hat-we've-all had-it up-to-ere-with-puzzle-games-you-inconsiderate-ignorant-littering-idiots rant, do you ealise how difficult it is to write full page about something like is? Due to software limitations can't put any screenshots in, nd most puzzle games have such ncredibly simple concepts that 's likely that even the Monty ython team would be hard ressed to stretch it to more han 200 words (For the benefit r those of you who don't emember the likes of Scott Of he Sahara, they used to have a bbit of filling in the spaces etween good bits by taking one ike and making it last 15 inutes. It wasn't very ntertaining.)

here there. You've written 127 ords and you haven't even said ything about the game yet.

h, thanks - you're such a omfort. (Nothing like a quick ub-heading to warm the heart of world weary, cynical hack.) (You ish Shatterer of Illusions) Mmm, uite.

But do you see what I mean, hough? The blurb runs to this: Rotor, from Supplement Software he game that will drive you ound the bend. Puzzle your way hrough level after mind blowing vel. Spin the pieces and make hem fit the pattern. But watch ut, because as you spin one iece, another 3 pieces will move as well. Features: Mode 4 graphix. Control options. Background music. Multi-levels. Jump a level facility. Written by Daton and DGP (the Supple Boys). That's it. What can I add to that? It looks as if even the person who wrote the ad was struggling to fill the tiny A8 (that's one sixteenth of the size of this page) box.

Right. Thank you. Now you've got that particular bee out of your bonnet (metaphorically speaking), perhaps you wouldn't mind stopping trying to make everyone feel sorry for you, and TELL US WHETHER THE BLASTED THING'S ANY GOOD

Ah yes. Quite forgot - that's what a review does, isn't it? Tell you whether the blasted thing's any good, I mean. Ha ha. (Better get on with it, then.)

Rotor's a vast improvement over Supplement's previous ventures into the genre. The music's an attractive, reasonably long E-Tracker ditty that runs throughout the game; the graphics, while still simple, are big, bold and bright, and the gameplay's much more complex and engaging than that of, say, Quatris. However, Rotor has one flaw. In that it suffers form the perfectly-straightforward-until-you-get-to-a-certain-stage-at-which-point-it-suddenly-becomes-impossible syndrome.

You see, the way in which Rotor works means that you can almost get through a level thinking you're doing fine, until you get to the very last bit and realise that there's one piece out of place. This wouldn't be a problem if you could move the pieces one at a time, but as it is you can only move them in groups of four, so you've basically got to do the whole level again just for this one piece, and at the end you find that there's another piece out of place. Tsk. However, the game design does have its good points, such as the credits system.

Rather than using conventional passwords, at the beginning of the game you're presented with 50 credits. You're also given a target number of moves in which to complete the level. If you exceed this target, you lose one credit for each extra move. However, if you've managed to complete the level in less than the target amount of moves, you gain credits. The beauty of this is that if you've got more than fifty credits, you can press F9 to skip the level and go on to the next, and as the game doesn't reward/subtract credits unless you complete the level, if you're doing badly then you can just reach for the top-right of the keyboard and leapfrog the nasty bits. Neat, eh?

Groovy.

So, the summary. Unlike some other recent SAM puzzle games, when playing Rotor I didn't get the feeling that this was something that could have been done on a Spectrum. Fans of the genre should lap it up.

Ratings

An enjoyable, if tricky, SAM puzzler.

PRESENTATION 86%
GRAPHICS 70%
SOUND 82%
PLAYABILITY 79%
ADDICTIVITY 80%
OVERALL 81%

THE CRASHED ARCHIVE

What, you may be wondering, is this "Crashed Archive" that keeps cropping up? Well, it's really incredibly simple: you send me any SAM or Speccy stuff that you don't want, and I keep

Sorry, what I meant to say is you donate any kind of stuff for the SAM or Speccy and

It goes on to the massive Crashed database of SAM/Speccy rubbins for future reference, and

It becomes available to any readers who are interested at crazy, knock-down prices! (At the moment I'm thinking of £2 each for commercial software, 50p for covertapes, £5 for any piece of hardware and 10p for magazines, all of which goes straight back into Crashed.)

The thinking behind the Archive is not to provide me with loads of free goodies and line my pockets in the process - remember that EVERY PENNY of profit from Crashed goes straight back into the mag, the only person who can benefit from it is you), but to create a centralised source of cheap, reliable (all hardware and software will be tested and cleaned up before being sent out), SAM or Spectrum-related stuff. A good alternative, I feel, to spending an outrageous amount of cash at a car boot sale on a second-hand copy of Three Weeks in Paradise, only to find that it's got Nik Kershaw's debut album taped over it.

Here's a few examples of the kind of stuff I'm interested in:

MAGAZINES. Not just YS, SU and Crash and their respective covertapes, but also older mags like Your Spectrum, ZX Computing and Sinclair Programs, and multiformats like New Computer Express, Gamesweek, Popular Computing Weekly, Home Computing Weekly, Computer And Video Games, Games-X and ACE. In short, anything that has ever mentioned the Spectrum or any of its derevatives.

SOFTWARE. Absolutely anything at all, whether for the ZX80, ZX81, Spectrum, QL, Z88, Timex, SAM or Hobbit. It doesn't matter if it won't load, or the packaging's missing, or anything like that - I want it. If you can, please include any information on the software, such as the release date and any reviews it received.

HARDWARE. Again, anything, functional or not. Interfaces, speech units, keyboards...

FANZINES. This applies to anything, from tapezines like 16/48 and Enigma to paper-based 'zines like ZAT and The Bug to short-lived diskzines such as Arcadia and Enceladus.

BOOKS. Anything from Mein Kampf to Robin Day's hedgehog. (Just to see if you're still taking notice, really.)

Send all things (sorry, my vocabulary seems to have deserted me) to: The Crashed Archive, Pear Tree Cottage, North Daighton, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS22 4EN.

ALL POINTS BULLETIN

This section is intended as a sort of 'Missing Persons' board - if anyone's out there is looking for a particular company, person or product, or knows where one is, get in touch. Here's a few to start off with.

Barry Parkinson
The author of the PCG DTP Pack. I did want to interview him for the first issue, but according to various sources, he's either moved to the Midlands, died or gone into hiding and owes rather a lot of people money.

John Richardson
The man who used to draw Crash's Jetman comic strip. Again, I did want him to contribute to Crashed, but he seems to have disappeared off the face of the Earth.

External 3" disk drives and interfaces for the +2A
According to the +2A's manual, you could add up to two +3 compatible Amstrad FD1 drives to the +2A via the Amstrad SI1 interface, but to the best of my knowledge, this interface was never produced. Unless anyone knows different.

Contribute!

You may have noticed that, while the SAM world is awash with new releases from Fred and Revelation, this issue only contains reviews of stuff from Supplement. There's a very good reason for this.

The thing is, that neither Fred nor Revelation sends out review copies, as they claim that they never generate any sales. This is where you come in.

Naturally, I'm going to buy and review myself as many SAM games as I can, but there's no way that I can afford them all and keep Crashed going, so I'm asking anyone out there who owns any currently available SAM game to write a review (roughly 800 words) and send it in, preferably either as a WordMaster text file (either on SAM disk, +D 3.5" disk or Spectrum tape) or on paper. (Don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar - I can sort that out for you.)

If your review is printed, you get either a four-month extension on your subscription or (if you don't subscribe) the next four issues free of charge. And that's it.